

## Lightning Justice!

On 7 December 2012, at a General Court Martial, Specialist Michael T. Brown, Company B, 225<sup>th</sup> Brigade Support Battalion, 2d Stryker Brigade Combat Team, was found guilty of Aggravated Sexual Assault. A Military Judge sentenced him to be reduced to the grade of E-1, to be confined for fifteen months, and to be discharged from the service with a Bad Conduct Discharge.

Specialist Brown attended a house party in Waianae, Hawaii on 2 September 2011. The party was a weekly event connected with a local running club. Around midnight on the night of the party, after several hours of drinking alcohol, Specialist Brown's friend witnessed him preparing to drive his vehicle with the victim—a heavily intoxicated 57 year-old woman—who was unconscious in the back seat of Specialist Brown's vehicle. SPC Brown's friend insisted on driving the vehicle after observing that Specialist Brown was too intoxicated to drive. The friend drove Specialist Brown and the victim to Specialist Brown's residence.

Upon arrival at Specialist Brown's residence, Specialist Brown and his friend assisted the victim in walking up a flight of stairs to enter the residence. Once inside, they placed the victim on Specialist Brown's bed whereupon the victim immediately fell unconscious again. Specialist Brown told his friend that he was going to sleep on a recliner. Instead, after his friend had left, Specialist Brown undressed the victim, climbed into bed with her, and sexually assaulted her.

The following morning, the victim was confused about what had happened. She knew she had been sexually assaulted, but could not recall all of the events clearly. After speaking with a friend, the victim reported the sexual assault to local law enforcement. Local law enforcement and the Schofield Barracks Criminal Investigation Division (CID) conducted an investigation. The victim's prompt reporting and cooperation was key to the successful prosecution of Specialist Brown.

Specialist Brown's case illustrates a common denominator that exists in many sexual assault cases—alcohol and drug abuse by the perpetrator or victim. You can reduce your chances of falling prey to a sexual predator by staying sober and steering clear of individuals who don't. Regardless of the circumstances, victims of domestic violence and sexual assault are strongly encouraged to report offenses. Please call the SAFE Line at (808) 624-SAFE (7233) for information and assistance. Victims can also report offenses to the chain of command, the military police, CID, a victim advocate, a chaplain, the inspector general or medical personnel

The Commanding General, 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division is committed to ensuring that victims receive the assistance, care, and support they need and deserve. Many victims of domestic violence and sex assault are reluctant to report offenses. Reporting these offenses may be the best way to ensure that victims receive the support they need and that such crimes are not repeated. All offenses made known to the command will be properly investigated by law enforcement and, if appropriate, perpetrators will be prosecuted.